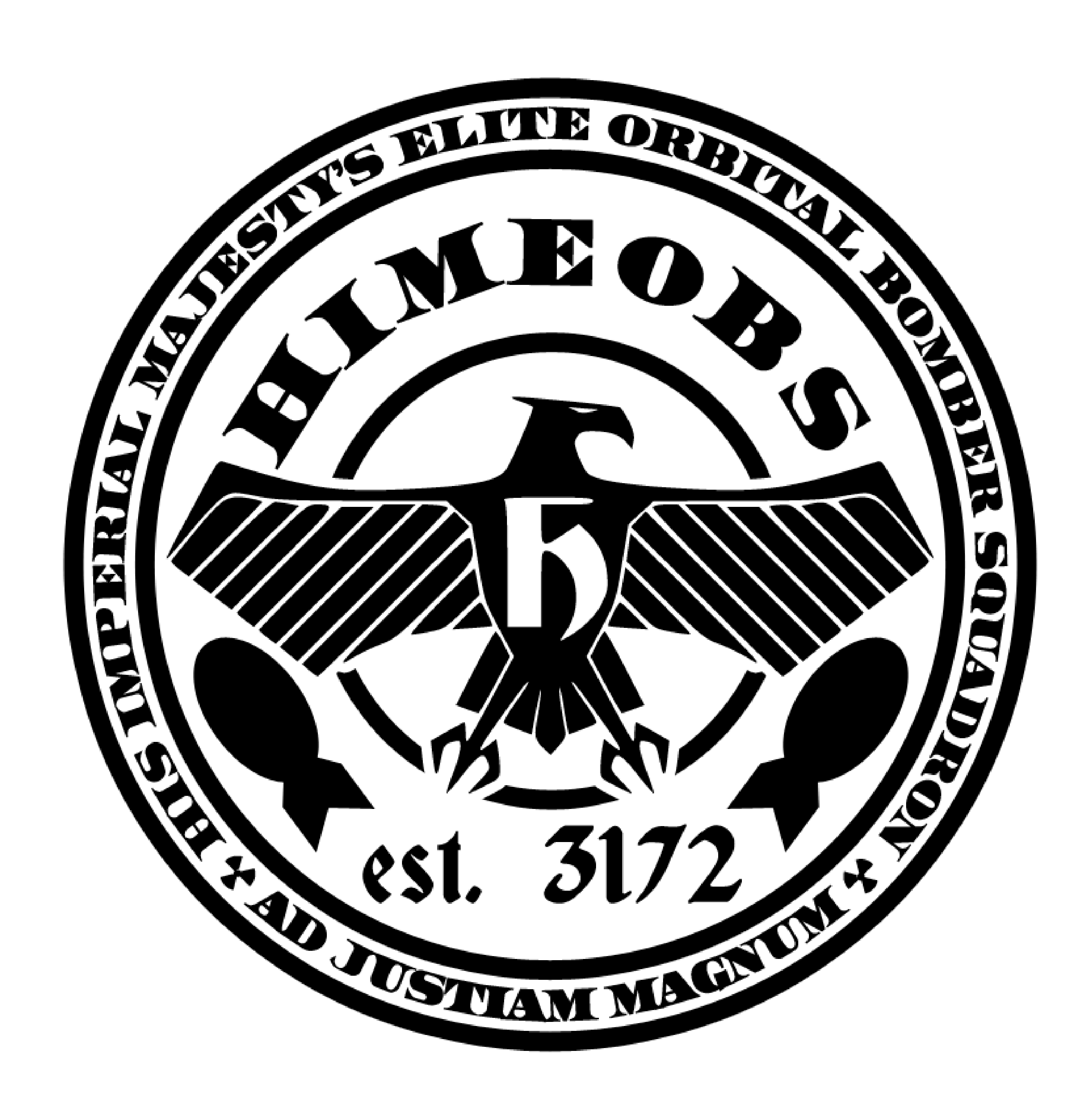
H.I.M.E.O.B.S.

<u>Training Manual</u>

Busting your bunker since (classified)

“YUOR FUCKSTOCK IS ASSPRONE, NUTCROCKER!”



Introduction.

First off, if you are reading this, welcome! It means you have managed to come to the attention of, and impress, His Imperial Majesty's Elite Orbital Bomber Squadron (and affiliated divisions), the finest up and coming troll group on the Internet. No doubt you are already excited at the possibilities for adventure, being banned, creating hugely mysterious and offensive pictures, confusing the hell out of people, dealing with the scum of the Internet, the prospect of infamy and revenge. All this and more awaits you.

However, it is not an easy job. To be a good troll (as opposed to a simple asshole) one must master a number of apparently disparate skills. To be able to insinuate, instigate, switch identities at the drop of a hat, understand the workings of forums, social dynamics, patience, hide one's identity and be skilled with several programs. And much more. Not all these skills are necessary in one person, though they are helpful. But among the group as a whole, these will create a legacy of destruction and despair across the entire net.

And that is the purpose of this manual. I have been personally tasked with the project by Captain Da and the HIMEOBS High Command, after no-one else wanted to do it. In here I will rack my brains and try to not only catalogue, but explain these skills so that you can be the best asset to HIMEOBS that you can be.

Note: All spellings are to use the British standard, except where I don't notice and the spell checker gets away with it. Sorry, but I like my words to have “u” in them. And I'm not really sorry, either.

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Chapter One

What is trolling?

Since you've already found your way here, you should almost certainly know the answer to that question anyway, but it should be clarified, for the sake of this manual and my own needs, if nothing else.

Some sites, not that I will name names, will consider anyone who disagrees with the majority view of the site as a troll (*cough* www.mysticwicks.com *cough*). Others will consider anyone who acts of out a perceived standard or normal method of behaviour on forums, as a troll. On some, merely being the wrong religion/ethnic group/race/sex/age/political affiliation will mark you.

However, all of these are wrong.

A troll, is someone who deliberately stirs up trouble, *for its own sake.* The troll may dislike what the site stands for, or be totally apathetic, or even sympathetic. But because of who is on it, what it is, or simply because its there and you've had a bad day, you decide to create some trouble to see what happens. Once you cross that line from honest poster to trouble maker, you have become a troll, and in the eyes of the majority of the Internet, turned to the "dark side".

However, that isn't such a bad thing. Given the Internet was meant to be an area of relatively high freedom compared to most of the world, it sure is full of tin pot dictators and petty egos, who abuse their powers as often as possible. Nepotism and corruption are facts of life for anyone who spends any time on an Internet community. And there are also those who abuse this freedom, such as hentai enthusiasts, camera whores and furries, who deserve a good bashing simply for what they are.

In such a situation, trolling is almost a *moral* action to take. After all, forcing a BBS dictator to go insane and have a breakdown by constant targeting of his site (for example, when the Iron Troll Brigade targeted http://gothpoetry.com) is hardly going to make anyone with an ounce of common sense and integrity feel bad, is it?

It may come as a surprise to some of you, but there is even a philosophy of trolling. The ancient Greeks started the art of logical debate, and some of the greatest IRL trolls came from that tiny country. Hell, Socrates, who patient, quiet methods of making people question *everything* got him killed eventually. The Sophists were notorious trollish mercenaries, selling their rhetorical debating knowledge to anyone who had the money to pay for their outrageous fees. You are now following in such great men's footsteps.

The rather depressive German philosopher Schopenhauer took this one step further. He wrote an entire book called the Art of Eristic Debate, in which he went to great lengths to explain various methods of how one could court controversy and win arguments for the sake of winning them. For this alone, Schopenhauer has been posthumously granted an honourary officer's commission in HIMEOBS and his book is included with the download.

Trolling should be done "for the lulz" (or lail) as much as any other reason. Because lets face it, if we can't make this funny, have a laugh and perhaps deflate some fevered egos, we may as well give away our troll account passwords now. The Internet is, for the most part, not Serious Business. But these people think otherwise, and their reactions prove it. If only they could laugh at themselves,

see what idiots they were....failing that, we can make the audience, or ourselves, have fun at their expense.

Of course, we wont just accept *anything* being done in the name of HIMEOBS. Obviously, areas such as non-ironic racism are personally distasteful to most, if not all, HIMEOBS operatives and there are certain other areas.

More importantly, they are almost always unnecessary, as you can create a fuss much more easily with other troll tactics. HIMEOBS may target, parody, satirize and mock racist sites, but we will not use their methods, for the above reasons.

The same applies to images of obvious illegal nature and anything else the High Command sees fit to disallow if it will tarnish our image and operations elsewhere. HIMEOBS will disavow such tactics and the members using them will be banned without hesitation.

Sorry about that, I'm sure you can understand, but I just wanted to clarify the situation, in writing for everyone. Anyway, onto the details!

Chapter Two

Internet technology

This chapter will be an overview of how to use the Internet (that thing you are using to get hold of this) to the best of your advantage. This is a basic skill and one all HIMEOBS operatives should be proficient in. We will cover browsers, proxies, images, hosting sites, emails and any other areas that may be of use to the smart troll.

Browsers.

As a troll, you need as many browsers as is physically possible to have on your PC without causing it to run out of memory. The reason for this is that while surfing forums, you can use different browsers to log in as different accounts, and also put them on different proxies, making it look like you are several people. The different designs will also aid you in remembering which identity you are posting as. Far too many trolls have burned themselves by forgetting which account they are using to post as before now. It also allows for you to be on several different forums, so you can send battle reports to other operatives at the HIMEOBS site, or troll multiple forums at once, or search for the pictures you need for a spam attack, etc....

I will list the most common browsers and what they have to offer here.

Firefox:

The single BEST troll browser available, without question. If you haven't already got this, I am frankly amazed. Firefox is an open source project that is highly customizable and quickly becoming a large rival of Internet Explorer in usage.

Useful attributes include:

Hundreds of skins (allowing you to change the interface to something streamlined, uncomplicated and in a nicer colour than most browsers).

Referrer remover, so site owners cannot tell where you came from, if you followed a link to their domain.

Imageshack/imagepile hosting mod, allowing you to host any pic you find with two simple clicks. This means you do not leech bandwidth (which may result in the picture being removed, a great shame) and also can host pics you have taken from sites that the domain you are trolling might have banned. Note: this is not an official mod, so you will have to search for it. It may also be incompatible with the latest updates, so be warned.

Javascript and pop-up blocker, removing most adds that may distract you in the vital moments of a campaign, as well as reducing the risk of exploits being used to attack your PC. Also handy for when you accidentally click your own browser bombs (and yes, it does happen...).

Multiple tags, allowing you to have one Firefox browser open, yet be on several different sites. You cannot use this to log in on two different accounts on the same site at once though. Trust me, I've

tried.

The StumbleUpon add on, which is a device allowing you to randomly surf the net for potential target sites. To sign up, you download the mod, fill in a name, fill in the areas you are interested in (for example Anime and Forums if you want to find some Hentai freaks to annoy) and away you go. It can also be useful in finding genuinely interesting sites, as well as whiling away the boring hours you are not practicing your trolling trade.

Throwaway email addresses. This is the latest innovation by some programmers, which allows Firefox to randomly generate email addresses which will last only as long as it needs to get you onto the site in question.

Password saver, making accessing a site quickly much easier. Why bother spending half a minute remembering the complex password you created to stop attempts at hijacking your account, when you can use this little thing?

There are far too many mods to list all the ones you may find useful, not only for trolling but in generally improving your own computer and internet experience. Its Open Source nature also makes it far better at adapting to problems of viruses and malicious programs that await the unwary internet user, especially those of us dealing in the seedy underbelly of the world wide web.

Internet Explorer:

The chances are, unless you are already far more familiar with computers than most people, this is the browser you start off using and comes with your PC as part of the Windows package. There is not much to say really. It works, thats about it. Because of its rather static nature (Microsoft being too incompetent to keep up with Open Source projects), it is far more susceptible to malicious programs and viruses, spyware etc...Its a back up browser at best, certainly not one for main use.

Opera:

Another Open Source browser, similar to Firefox, but with several important differences. First off, Opera is extremely streamlined. Only the minimum necessary buttons are made available for the surfer with this program. Secondly, it is noticeably faster than all other browsers I have tried. Thirdly, it also uses tabs, but unlike Firefox, will automatically open new pages in tabs (with Firefox you must right click to select this). Unfortunately, should you accidentally hit the main close button in the right hand corner, unlike Firefox (which warns you), it will close them all without any hesitation. However, it also has a useful tool whereby it can store multiple passwords and account names in its memory, which can be cycled through by using the wand icon button. All in all, an excellent second choice, for when you are busy or Firefox is playing up (a rare but possible problem) and highly recommended for HIMEOBS operatives wishing to be among the elite.

Mozilla:

From the same people who came up with Firefox, this is a less flashy, reliable and relatively useful browser. It has a streamlined appearance similar to Opera and also has tabbed windows that operate in the same manner as on Firefox. Nothing truly special to note, but nothing drastically bad or complex either. Its like Internet Explorer would be, if it was made by competent people.

There are far more browsers than this, of course, but these 4 should be enough for your basic needs. If you find a good browser, write it up and tell us at www.himeobs.com and we will include it in the next edition of this manual.

Proxies.

If you are going to read anything in this section, it has to be this. Proxying is an incredibly useful skill for all sorts of reasons, which I will now explain. I will also explain the workings behind them, allowing you to use the information here better.

A proxy is essentially another machine which you can use to surf the internet with. This means any attempts to identify or trace you are ultimately futile, as they will only lead to the proxy address. Everyone on the internet leaves an Internet Provider address of where they are surfing. Moderators can tell these from your posts, but admins can tell these even from those not logged in or posting. This IP address can be *static* or *variable.* A static one never changes and a variable one does, obviously. If you have a static one and it gets banned, that is a permanent ban for you and without a proxy you can never get back on. With variable however, if you clear the cookies from the said site (done in the browser) and restart your computer, reconnecting to the internet, you will have a new IP address. If you are with AOL, this will be entirely random, otherwise you will still traceable to a certain area. If yours acts as the latter, you can be banned, but only if the entire range of variable IPs are banned.

The good thing is that your IP is also shared by others. If someone you are trolling is on the same IP as you and you want to take them out, a kamikaze mission that aims for a quick ban can yield huge results. It also means that while you can be traced to a certain area, you cannot be traced individually.

Now, onto how to use these little gems for your advantage. There are two basic proxy types you can use, CGI and manual ones. I prefer manual, but CGI is easier for the beginner.

Manual:

To use these, you must first search for a working proxy. Use a standard search engine for this purpose. Once you find one you like, you should copy the numbers. For **Firefox** users, take the following advice:

1. Go into **Tools** and select **Options**
2. Choose the **General** option and select **Connection Settings**
3. Once here, enter the numbers for your proxy into the **HTTP Proxy** section. If not specified, the last 4 numbers are usually those for the Port. These are normally 8080, though there are a few variations.
4. Log onto a large site, such as Google or BBC News. If this fails, chances are the proxy is a dud. Pick another, and follow the steps again until you find a working one.
5. To remove the proxy, simply clear it from the area you entered it in and put nothing in the space.

The procedure is pretty much the same for each browser, with only minor variations. With the one

above as the example and some minor practice, you should be able to figure it out for yourself. Don't be afraid to experiment and figure these things out on your own. Thats how many of us found it out and it gives you immense pleasure in knowing you did it, as well as giving you the confidence to experiment more. Many people treat a computer as a vastly complex device that may collapse into chaos at any moment, whereas in fact they are quite robust and simple to figure out, given some time and the occasional mistake. Worst comes to worst, contact a member of the HIMEOBS team and chances are they already know what to do, or can figure it out for you.

CGI Proxies:

These are website based proxies that are much more simple to operate. All you have to do is enter the website address and you will be able to view it as you would with a normal proxy. However, there are some minor problems with this method. Firstly, other trolls may also be using it and will not take kindly to you ruining their proxy. Secondly, many rely on advertising for their costs and this can be an annoyance. Finally, with some, it can be hard or impossible to sign in, depending on the site and how much information the browser allows to be stored. Thats why I prefer manual, though this can be used in times when nothing else is working.

Tor – an end to manual proxies

Since parts of this manual were originally written a hell of a breakthrough was made in proxying technology, that of the invention of the Tor network. Never mind how it works, basically you can either download the additional mods to work with Firefox, or you can download 2 browsers with integrated Tor usage (Torpark and OperaTor). These have essentially made manual proxies obsolete. However, they are popular with trolls world over, meaning you may get banned just as easily as before. Also, the limited number of servers means any highly trolled site may have your IP already banned.

That said, Tor derived proxies should be the first choice of a troll concealing their ID, regardless of their speed issues. Manual proxies are now considered last resorts, pretty much.

Hosting Sites and Images

To use an oft quoted cliché, a picture is worth a thousand words. This is especially the case when an idiot has just made a complete prat of himself and you post a “Pwned!” pic directly after it. Pictures can add a comedic effect words alone can never accomplish. Such legendary pieces of art as “The Internet – Serious Business” or “Internet Tough Guy Magazine” can cripple the ego of a poster in seconds, reducing them to a laughing stock.

They also have another use. Should the site be scheduled for a mass spamming, larger pictures will slow down the site, especially .gifs with their moving parts. Combined with smilies, as in the almighty Iron Troll Technique, it can bring an entire site to standstill for hours while the browsers crash and the admin panics.

The most simple way to acquire pictures is by using Google Image Search. Enter the key words and away you go. Very handy indeed. Any good pictures should be saved to your hard drive however, just in case. From here, you can use one of several dozen image hosting sites, such as Imageshack or Photobucket. The latter is a personal site where you can permanently host pictures, with the URL being in part based on your user name, whereas the former is totally randomized and not nearly as permanent. However, both allow you to host pictures from your computer, allowing you to place

them on the net to your heart's content.

Emails

Almost always needed to get on most sites. The easiest to use are those from Hotmail or preferably Gmail, both of which are done in about 10 minutes. Hotmail is becoming more complex with its questions, not to mention the end of the address may be an indication you are lying about where you are from (co.uk versus .com for example). Gmail is more easy to register, plus you can repeatedly invite yourself and destroy the account once you are in. However, every HIMEOBS operative should now be aware of the Firefox disposable email mod, which should probably be the first one you want to use. Failing that, agents should now be aware of 2prong.com, which has randomly generated temporary emails, perfect for automated systems.

Some sites will not accept Gmail or Hotmail because of such intense previous trolling and exclusivity. For this, you may want to use either your HIMEOBS email if you have one, or another one, such as a University based address. It is well worth getting one of these more private emails, as spam is virtually nonexistent and so makes a perfect main account.

Chapter Three

Forums and how they work.

Understanding forums is not necessary, however it can help direct how an attack should take place and inform you as to the counter-measures available to the administrator. You must remember, as a troll, these people are your natural enemies and should be treated with the contempt they deserve. You really should know your enemy in order to defeat him.

Always test the limitations of any new forum software before planning your assault. Use the preview button and be prepared for browser crashes.

Forum Software

Here is a list of the most common software a forum will be made from and how to deal with it, as well as any weak spots that may exist.

phpbb software

This is the most standard and common forum software I have seen. Its relative ease to use, wide variety of skins and modifications, as well as easy interface for first time users, make it a favourite of the inexperienced and savvy administrator alike.

On these forums, an admin can tell if you are online even if your profile is hidden. They have access to the database, so if they are computer savvy private messages can be read. The admin can change your profile, delete, move, edit and trace the IP of posts. They can IP ban people and change the settings for sign ups, making it harder for you to get in.

A moderator can edit, move and delete the posts on such a forum too, as well as tell the IP address, but that is the limit of their power. They cannot ban or make substantial changes to the workings of the forum. It should be noted both can edit posts without having to show it was them who did it. So prepare for asshattery of that sort.

The great failing of phpbb is that it is highly susceptible to the Iron Troll Technique. Its smilies, many with moving parts and no power to limit image posting (except by disabling it completely, something most are loathe to do) mean such a forum can be run into the ground by only a very few trolls in a short time period, perhaps an hour or less. The other failing is the highly limited moderators, who can do little against a determined opponent except try and limit the damage by keeping up, a task they almost always fail at.

Vbulletin

This is a relatively popular software format, especially with the richer and larger sites, whose revenue can cover the costs. It was also designed by someone who hated trolls.

It is highly customizable and flexible and gives the administrator large powers, which they can choose to delegate to lessers if they wish. An admin who trusts his mods on such a forum can give them almost as much power as he has, making any authority figure very threatening.

The powers of an admin are they are able to delete the entire account and all its posts with two button clicks. In addition, they can ban members and do everything else a phpbb admin can do. They can put a user on total ignore, where their posts are only visible to them, no-one else. A fate worse than death, some would say. The moderators can and often do have powers almost equal to that of the admin, often only unable to change the sign up procedure and basics of how the site runs. Nothing can be edited without it being clear who did it however, which is a small blessing.

Even the basic users can put you on ignore, if they choose. They also have report buttons, for the snitches to use if they want. Many operate off a “karma” system where you can lick the ass of people you l...um, praise posts you like and smite those you dislike. This can allow for you to insult people, as most allow comments, but they will know the account it came from.

Flaws are few. The admins can even limit the amount of images that are used, so it is best to preview before trying any ITT style attacks on the place.

These sort of sites are best for the subtle, long troll. You have to troll without being obvious, step carefully and use fake accounts to have an impact.

Invision

Not that common, but often used to create cheap sites, as it has free hosting with few adverts, which are mostly unobtrusive. Rather similar to phpbb, it has a few important differences.

Admins can do all the usual crap, however mods can also ban on these sites, or limit your posting. The ban can be temporary or permanently, and they can subject your posts to review by them. There is also a report button, for snitches to use. Edits can be done covertly, as with phpbb.

SMF

A rather uncommon format, preferred by those administrators who know what they are doing and like software that works without many major glitches. Admins have the usual powers, but edits cannot be done covertly. Mods can but often do not have access to the admin control panel. For all intents and purposes a phpbb that works better and is slightly less aesthetically pleasing.

This list is by no means exhaustive. As HIMEOBS grows and carries out attacks on other sites using different software, our battle reports submitted by on site trolls will eventually yield a working knowledge of almost every type of forum. Expect these to be included in later editions of this manual.

Chapter 4

Trolling Tactics

This is the section you have undoubtedly been waiting for. In fact, I suspect many of you have flicked forward to this part and missed all the vital, if somewhat technical, information in the previous chapters. Go back there and read, recruit! Its cool, I'll wait. OK, nice to have you back.

Anyway, in here I will give a sample of the sort of things you can do on a short troll. I define a short troll as anything where you don't expect to be there next week, or else the site is so small that you want to take it down now. For longer term campaigns, you'll have to wait for the next chapter. The difference between the short and long troll are somewhat similar to that of the short and long cons done by con-artists. Almost anyone can do the short troll, its quick, relatively easy and takes little planning. But don't expect huge results. Conversely, the long troll takes a degree of planning, subtly, knowledge of the marks and patience. But the results can be fantastic, especially if you don't blow your cover. But more on that later.

Here are some samples of the things you can do briefly to upset a forum and get into the trolling spirit.

The Iron Troll Technique:

A now infamous method of spam attack created by Buddha's Ghost Penis (hereafter BGP), this was first used on an early ITB campaign against the now defunct www.principiadiscordia.org forums. This form only works on phpbb forums, but can be quickly changed for other formats, especially if one knows how to copy and paste. Here is a short sample of what it looks like in text form.

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This should be copied and pasted repeatedly in the message before it is posted, for maximum effect. Once posted, these change into smilies, of course, all moving and changing colour and taking up lots of memory and bandwidth. One should also use BB Code to place huge pictures (preferably HIMEOBS ones, but use a broad search term on Google Image if you have to) within this mess, then copy and repeat until the length of the message is met (usually at 10,000 “words”). The BB Code to place an image is as follows [img]www.pictureurl.com/pics.jpg[/img] Obviously you replace the bit in the middle with the actual picture URL.

Once this is posted, do not click to view the post, just return to the main forum, as the options allow you. Trust me on this. I am on a large broadband network and this has crashed my browser before, after taking nearly 2 minutes to load the whole thing. As you should now have the entire full sized thing copied, just find another thread you haven't hit and post the thing again. Repeat until you are

banned or there are no threads left. This brings an entire forum to a standstill, as we have seen with previous uses. Also, the administrator has to delete each post manually, meaning if he or she is on dial-up, it may take days for the forum to recover, if it ever recovers.

Its also suggested that each HIMEOBS member saves this as a text file, with the URLs and all and customizes it to their personal taste, with pictures of HIMEOBS and whatever else they want to add in. That means when you want to use it again, all you have to do is open the file and copy. For example, my ITT file is 15 pages long and filled with a variety of links. All I have to do is select all and paste, then post.

The News Troll

A favourite of certain unnamed people, this involves using an account to post a dramatic news story, such as "DIRTY BOMB EXPLODING IN NEW YORK!" or "OSAMA BIN LADEN CAPTURED!", "DICK CHENEY ASSASSINATED!" with no comment and a link to the story.

Of course, this won't be the link to the actual story, because it isn't really *happening.* Instead, link it to something very mundane or unusual, but hardly of importance. In fact, it is best to have a certain "in-joke" theme to these stories, such as picking Bruce Springsteen or someone else for the story to be linked to. Local news of no interest at all is also good.

Immediately after this, you will have a flurry of confused and worried posts, as well as a few who got what you were doing, but didn't find it funny at all, as well as those who hate idiots who fall for these things. Mission accomplished.

The Newbie Troll

In this, you play the role of the innocent and rather slow newbie, who has never posted on a forum before, doesn't know anything about the subject at hand, but is persistent and unafraid to ask questions. These work especially well on themed forums, such as those on paganism, Linux or Anime, for example.

Every piece of jargon, every technical term and anything else you can think of should be innocently questioned. Even if someone just says "lol", you should ask what they mean. You will reduce the most patient and nice to tears within hours, if done right.

The Character Troll

Technically, this can be done both on the short and long term, but I include it here, as it is basically the same thing *done over a long time* for the latter variation.

In this, you create a memorable and somewhat unusual character, totally different to what most people have previously experienced. Because they already have their own character, it is only up to you to make sure it is believable and carried out in the manner correct for the troll. Three examples will follow to clarify.

Chef Diesel.

The notorious Tongan hustler and love machine, as well as sports and politics commentator . First done on the FuckedCompany forums, he has subsequently been sighted all over the internet. His use of caps, talk of splitting domes, strange spelling and extensive use of acronyms make him instantly recognizable.

Autoerotic Asphyxiation.

The American "contractor" and recruiter for the military. An incredibly right wing, gung-ho, racist, pro-administration hawk, he will often appear telling nancies to prepare to be drafted for Iran and/or North Korea. Very useful in satirizing the views of the radical right, he will often recommend the most bigoted among them for intelligence work, as they will have no problem in torturing smudgy people for fun and profit. Also writes all in caps, probably for the appearance of "shouting" and the annoyance factor.

Giggles.

This troll has gone under several names, but this is the most recent. Gratuitous use of Bloodhound Gang lyrics, deliberate misuse of forum titles in posts, truncated words and one word posts are all his hallmark. Many a forum member has found psychological discomfort at reading a post that goes "I'M SOAPING MY BOX BABY, YEAH! SRSLY" and the barrage of such genius prose as "I'M DOING THE SILENCE OF THE LAMBS DANCE TO CHRISTIAN ROCK" is an assault on even the most stable forum poster's sensibilities.

Because of all of these are characters who have been developed over time by their creator, it becomes child's play to slip into the role, think *as* them and then post something they would. Because of their strong presence and trollish nature, they will always be divisive and court controversy. Creating such a character and linking them to HIMEOBS is not only a fascinating creative exercise and good practice for using multiple accounts, but often an end in and of itself. A good troll has to be a little crazy, very flexible, the sort of person who is so used to different situations they don't have so much a single personality (or the semi-personality of most normal people) but almost court multiple personality disorder, adapting and changing to the situation in hand.

The Impossible Situation Troll.

This is a troll post that sounds totally fake, yet just might be real. The FC "my wife is sleeping with the poolboy" troll is a perfect example of this.

The Wordfilter Troll

This is an easy troll which other trolls will flock to. Simply state in your post that a certain word when typed will be filtered into another word. Then post several successful word filtered posts using whatever word it's supposed to be filtered to. What you will get are tons of non-filtered posts and tons of trolls pretending the filter actually worked.

The 'failed troll' Troll

This is where you do a poor attempted troll or flame in order to build up the rest of the forum's confidence. Usually, backslapping will occur shortly after everyone has said their piece, which will give you plenty of material with which to attack them, using your skills to full ability and catching them off guard.

This is by no means an exhaustive list of what can be done. If you know the site you are going on has complete control freak admins, question their authority, the locked posts and the bannings of members etc...Against certain ideological positions, use that against them in a form of philosophical ju-jitsu. For example, question conservatives who support President Bush why they love the Big Government he has created. Ask the left, whose traditions lay in writers like Voltaire and Kant, why they are more open to bashing Christianity than Islam. Ask Discordians why they feel its OK to use their powers or imaginary authority to lord it over others. And so on and so forth.

Most of this is contextual, so watch the site, take perhaps half an hour to read the posts, pick up the general vibe of the site, then dive in. I can't give advice for every situation, but hopefully this helps in showing basic things you can do, as well as weak points to hit on certain types of people.

Chapter Five

The Long Troll

This section will be much different from even the previous section. In fact, this is not so much a lesson on trolling as a class in social dynamics. When doing a long term troll, you are aiming at a campaign against a well entrenched site, or many individuals on such a site where previous tactics would not work.

For this, you have to troll without *being* a troll. You have to use a smidgen of cunning and skill to achieve your goals. And for all this, you need to understand and manipulate the games of society and online communities, for your own ends.

Long term trolling strategies should be looking at paralysing a site without trolls even being suspected as being there – or at worst, that the trolls act as catalysts for future arguments, turn the user base against the mods and admins and split the community apart.

This can be achieved in a number of ways, which I am about to explain. I stole these terms unashamedly from MeatBallWiki, and because its nearly 11pm and I'm out of coffee, I'm going to use their terms unless they are so horrendously ghey I am forced to be creative.

Picking a decent target for longer trolls: a simple guide.

You will get nowhere if you pick the wrong sort of targets for these trolls, so you need to know what to look for. Just as well I wrote this guide then, isn't it?

Basically, and for the purposes of this example, we can divide internet users into 3 sorts of people: neutrals, flamers and trolls. Neutrals are your average joes and we care nothing about them, for this. Flamers are those who are likely to start flaming and/or reacting badly when challenged or trolled, and the trolls are us.

We can therefore rate a forum as falling into one of 4 different catergories, based on conditions before we start to attack. These are as follows

Low Flamers, Low Trolls. The forum is boring, but stable. Is a hard target for subtle trolls, unless you can find a long buried landmine. However, flaming can liven the place up and may allow for the trolls to play both ends (being the trolls and the trolled, drawing everyone else in). A relatively hard target, because of prevailing conditions.

Low Flamers, High Trolls. Boring again, from an attack point of view. Though usually these make the most informationally interesting forums, as an aside. Basically, previous trolling has driven the entertainment elsewhere, meaning attacking these places has little point. As they are troll towns however, they can be good areas for recruitment or hearing the latest rumours/targets.

High Flamers, High Trolls. This is usually a transitory stage before turning into the above forum. Trolls already present piss off the flamers enough that they flounce, never to return (unless they do). Is also the stage of the following forum immediately after an attack (see below).

High Flamers, Low Trolls. The perfect target rich environment. These are easy pickings, waiting to be exploited. Entertainment abounds. Its only going to take a single spark to make this entire house of cards collapse in on itself.

The trick, of course, is to convert a low flamer community into a higher one. Once that is achieved, the site is your oyster.

The Landmine:

Any large community is going to have a certain amount of 'history' (read: butthurt) among certain of its posters. There will be a certain amount of animosity lurking beneath the surface between these people. Or it could be a tired and super-old debate that only causes more problems than it solves whenever it rears its ugly head. Whatever. The point is that should you stumble upon what this is, you will almost certainly piss off certain members if you make any references to it, bring it up again or even ask questions about it.

The trick is to play the stupid, unaware newbie role, then detonate the mine, firing off the debate and subsequent flames. Many of these will be directed at you of course, which is exactly what you want. It allows you to act as an injured party, and act towards your attackers with self-righteous indignation, which will cover your trolling quite well. Of course, the other trolls involved in this should be lurking around forum as well, ready to jump in on the opposing sides, make things worse, then withdraw. Soon, the entire forum will be covered in flame wars, which is incredibly satisfying.

The only real drawback with this is either they don't take the bait when you detonate, or they suspect trolling when your compatriots jump in. The former cannot really be dealt with, but with the latter, the original troll (playing the attacked n00b) should probably try to draw them in somehow. It also may help if the other trolls make a habit of backing up those you reckon most likely to stomp the "n00b" for his error.

Pre-existing Issues

HIMEOBS thrives on these. Similar in some ways to the Landmine, it is essentially something that existed in the forums before your arrival, which you then exploit. It could be a new rule, a new, evil sonofabitch mod, whatever. Unlike the Landmine, the issue is obvious and spoken about freely. The idea is to infiltrate, avoid the problem for a short time (as to not look suspicious) but then get more and more involved with whatever it is. By gently prodding at the issue, then becoming more and more insistent, you can turn yourself into a Rebel Leader with little challenge, and direct the angry masses against the admins and mods.

Most other trolls should act as the main one's sockpuppet, giving him support but essentially letting him take the centre stage (Rebel Leader's rely mainly on personal charisma, plus their cause to gain a following), with a couple supporting the admins, of course, but in an obnoxious manner as possible. You know, the "this is a forum, if you don't like the way it is run, then leave" and "the admins pay for the bandwidth, last time I checked this means they can do what they want" or the old favourite "this is not a democracy". Basically, you make any followers of the admins, no matter how reasonable or moderate, look like power hungry toadies, so only idiots will vocally support them, further undermining their position. In the unlikely event a coup succeeds, then HIMEOBS

will have another covert base to operate from.

Problems with this are if you make a convincing enough argument that the admins actually reverse their decision. Then you are pretty much screwed. There are a couple of tactics you can try and use to extricate yourself from this, but they require some subtlety. The easiest of the two is to point out how problems like this can only keep on happening until there is a change in how the forum is run (a structural failure). You may be able to work this angle enough that you are considered for a mod place (because you shake up the groupthink), but don't bet on it. This would only happen in an enlightened regime in the first place. However, if you can agitate enough to cause an admin or mod to try and flame you, then you have your cause again.

The second involves working off how the forum makes people stay during such a time. Because people will have invested time in a community, made friends etc often admins will play off those emotional ties to try and dissuade possible rebels from leaving or opposing them. The best thing you can do to someone being used in such a way is to point it out to them. People hate to be psychologically manipulated, and once they realize it is happening, they will turn against the target. Also, since they know the site far better than you, they can push the buttons of members there far more easily. This can be done even if your cause is doing well, of course.

How to be a Rebel Leader, or Anti-Authoritarianism.

The distinguishing facet of a Rebel Leader (iconoclast) is that they do not respect rules solely because they are rules, and they do not respect authorities solely because they are proclaimed authorities. On the other hand, they don't ignore the rules: not all the time. Their objections are morally rooted (important to remember).

Anti-authoritarians force admins to choose between three options

Hurt me.

Make rules against me criticising you or your rules, attack me, attempt to blacken my reputation and banhammer me. Break out the IP bans and FlameWars - you know you want to, and I can give as good as I get. I can troll with the best of them (Best case scenario).

Ignore me.

Let me have my right to FreeSpeech, pretend to listen, but do nothing to address my concerns. That's ok: I can bypass you and take my case to ordinary posters. Give me enough time and I'll organise a hostile takeover or lead the rebels away - but only if I can convince others that I'm right. (requires more work, not ideal. Hearts and minds campaign, blah)

Embrace me.

Yes, I'm naive and idealistic, but Criticism Is Feedback, and you know I'm right. Get me on your side, and I'll show you I can do friendship as well as attacks. Give me some limited responsibility and I'll perform my role with zeal, though I've no desire to take your job. (dull, takes away any justified cause. Minor mischief may be done with powers, but is unlikely, see above).

Of all the reactions, you are likely to first off get responses nearing Ignore. However, against exceptionally hyper-sensitive admins or when you have a measure of poster support, you will invite

attacks. Perfect. The main way to win posters over is to force the mods into a position where they abuse their power, or else mention past events of it happening, proving the authoritarian structure of the forum. Force them into a position where they can only explain their decision based on their own say so, and the rest of the forum (unless they are incredibly gutless) will fall in line.

Standard flamebaiting

I'm sure I don't need to tell you what flaming is, but assuming you've been living cave all these years (not those fancy ones Bin Laden has though. I bet that fucker even has broadband), I will.

Flaming is basically ad hominem, pretending to be a real argument. Your main thrust is insulting the other poster, with threadbare references to the subject at hand. That way, you are insulting him not simply because he/she/it is a “tard”, but because only a “tard would believe Bush went into Iraq with best intentions. Seriously, were you dropped on a rock as a baby or something?”

Flame wars usually develop out of a normal discussion in these ways:

1 Someone offends people through arrogant behavior
2 A thread of discussion touches upon a LandMine
3 The rules or values of the community are questioned
4 when a poorly qualified contributor posts questionable material.
5 A participant tries to communicate with a chronic flamer (it's difficult to stay cool and polite)
6 An “Old Guard” member tries to pull rank.

There are plenty more, of course, but these should get you thinking in the right ways. As you can see, pushing the line, especially against established members, is a good way to go about it. Another is standard contextual flamebait. For example, on a political forum, abortion, gun ownership and the Iraq war are flamebait. On Pagan forums, Christianity and intolerance are. And so on and so forth. So long as you know something about even the stereotypes of the groups you are trolling, you have your flamebait.

An obvious, but easy tactic is to get several trolls to post flamebait over the forum, within a relatively short period. Sockpuppet accounts should naturally be in place to argue violently against the original position. After a few pages of heated debate, a poster may withdraw, only to be drawn to the next flamebait. They get angry, rivalries ensue and the entire forum goes down in flamewars. Troll accounts will naturally be making matters worse by fighting on every side, increasing the ferocity and tempo of the flaming to the highest possible levels.

The idea is quite simple – draw in as many people as possible and create as many grudges as you can. People who band together in one thread need to be at each other's throats in the next. And so on and so forth. Only people out of the flame war have any chance of stopping it before it naturally burns out, so bring them in. Watch out for people who declare the flaming “boring” or “pointless” - they are trying to kill the dramallama and need to be dealt with quickly (insult them back into the game).

Naturally, this is harder than it looks and will likely not work to its full potential without a Landmine going off. Still, it is a worthwhile skill to practice.

The Structure of Flame Wars

When too much energy gets put into the system - from Flames, trolls and deep rooted political debates for example - the growth can become too fast to handle. The campfire can grow out of control and become a Flame War, a phenomenon where the argument spreads across multiple pages.

You can tell that you are experiencing a Flame War when you suddenly lose track of where the rapidly expanding "front" of the argument is. You feel that you are making the same point in multiple places. You have to argue "laterally", across pages, in order to put forward a cohesive perspective. You no longer know what pages are related to the argument because people keep creating new ones in a self-defeating effort to contain the discussion, to recan the worms so to speak. Older pages, even gems, become casualties as the interlocutors recruit them for the fight.

Flame Wars have a distressing habit of exploding across pages as the posters feel that the existing pages are too difficult to understand (ie: they are getting their asses handed to them in the fight). They start "fresh" pages in a hope of containing the debate in the new thread or, if a troll, in making the problem worse.

Their efforts are further undermined by emotional people unable to abandon the old argument (and trolls), feeling that they need to get the last word in. This process is repeated as good intentioned people try to "refactor" the live discussion, only expanding the front further.

Trolls must actively attempt to split discussion across as many pages as possible, thereby weakening posters by dividing them both in argument and posting. Savvy mods will try and contain the flames, so don't let them, or even better, draw them in and call into question their impartiality. Make sure any moderator action is painted as “punishment” against posters, not attempts to stop the flames. Keep the flames going in order to confuse and demoralize posters. Take quotes said in anger out of context and use them to either start new threads, or continue fights in old ones. In short, they anything to muddle the coherence and consistency of the discussion.

Even well intentioned people can fall into this trap. Often a deep-seated community disagreement can flood across the entire forum. Every problem or debate becomes an event to reargue the same points. Every point becomes grounded with every case. When faced with the necessity to make a decision, endless effort must be expended by one camp or another just to push the cause for a trivial case. When people do act out a decision, they must spend an enormous amount of energy defending themselves. Soon people no longer want to act. Analysis paralysis sets in. The dysfunctional community can not respond to crises. People become disillusioned and leave. The trolls win

Raising the stakes

Potentially drama-saving techniques, for when your strategies are failing, can include the following:

Starting a flame war
Appeal to authority figures (in the hope they will tell the whiney bitch to fuck off)
Appeal to or attack online allies of the individual in question
Move the arena of conflict, by taking it to PMs, email, IRC or their Myspace/blog etc. Also, online stalking (find other sites they post on and attack there)
Enlist third parties to join in. This works especially well if you know of or discover any forum exiles (think the MW members at EB&G, despite their general ineffectiveness).

Create an entry for them on ED, or create a similar attack site/blog.
Take the argument offline (send screenshots to their friends, family and employers).

Raising the stakes may blow your cover as a troll, but it almost always creates more drama and this is why it is such a powerful and useful technique. If ever you need a tactical edge to complement your overall strategy, consider one of these. In fact, this can be used as a strategy in and of itself, against an individual. Gradual escalation may eventually cause them to freak out, and at the very least it will be very entertaining.

<u>Making any conflict worse: a guide</u>

Causes of conflict can be nearly limitless, however the most frequent are the following:

Data (misinformation, lack of access, PI given out etc)
Relationships (anything relating to social interactions, from romance to personality clashes)
Values (politics, religion etc)
E-reputation (relates to the relationship one, but is of overriding importance and so deserves its own catergory)
Resources (control and say in the running of a site)

<u>Fanning the flames</u>

Never assume people are acting in good faith. Everything is personal, or at least should be portrayed that way to the “wronged” party.

React to malice. If someone clearly dislikes an other poster, stir it up. Say things like “you're not going to stand for that, are you?” PMing such sentiments is a good idea, as its basically a “lets you and him fight” situation.

Since **the issue is personal**, make sure the persons involved become a part of the argument. Ad hominem and flaming is thus assured.

Also, **everything is unfair**. Mods are always biased. When a mod does not do something in your puppet's favour, they are clearly biased and the whole System is against the puppet.

Never allow the conflict to be defined. The vaguer it is, the more likely more people are going to be insulted and get involved (napalm principle). As soon as anyone tries to frame the debate, resist it.

Not business as usual. Try to disrupt other conversations with some skill (toolbox the threads) so that the complaint becomes the primary issue.

Reject attempts to seek common ground or play up similarities as psychological manipulation. I mean, it is anyway, on some level, even if it is true.

Ignore threadjackers or toolboxers. If someone should do this in the complaint thread, a troll needs to rejack the conversation quickly.

Claim all third parties are tainted by bias. Make it up if you have to. Also, make your pro-admin trolls overly keen on that person, thereby planting the seeds of suspicion.

Do not allow compromise. You are in the right, are the wronged party. Why should your puppet concede anything to the other side?

How to make the conflict worse: a "pro-admin" troll's guide

Attempt to stifle the debate. Trolls pretending to suck up to the mods need to try and silence dissent, causing the conflict to become more venomous and likely to end up in a flame war. If the puppet feels like they cannot get their point across via normal channels, extremer reactions result.

Shout Them Down. Don't let a single point slide, hammer every point, repeat to absurdum.

Enlist idiots. Appeal to the most moronic members of the site for popular support. Encourage them to dogpile the troll puppet.

Involve everyone. Be it idiots you've enlisted, or ordinary members, get everyone in on the fun, one way or another!

Knife in the back. Pretend to see their point, or concede they may be right. Just as things look ready to die down, strike and start everything up again.

Miscellaneous tricks and tactics

The troll has the attacker's advantage of flexibility - you can start off being angelically good, then move to betrayal or alienation later on, according to what seems likely to be most effective.

Divide opinion as to your troll status. If the distribution is quite even, this creates significant tension between the people on opposite ends of the spectrum; the skeptics are sickened at how others could be taken in by the performance, while the forgivers question the motives behind the continued hostility of the other members. The people in the middle may find themselves quietly taking sides, and the issue becomes a Land Mine. At this point, the you can exploit the tension and encourage conflict by subtly employing other tactics.

If someone praises a contribution, you should misrepresent this support as applying to yourself in general.

When the you are attacked, do the opposite: make the attack seem like it was against your contribution, regardless of what it is really about.

Trick n00bs into seeing you as a maligned and put upon person. Win their support to create proxy forces willing to defend you.

Always always always exploit back room channels. Gain peoples IM names and use these to pass on (mis)information that you want them to see. You can use PMs, on one hand the mods may read them and banhammer you, but on the other they may be stupid enough to reveal so, thus showing a huge breach in trust which will turn the forum against them. It's your call, really.

Also note any backroom comms among the mods and admins. This is fertile ground for anti-

authoritarian conspiracy theories and claims of cliques. Make people feel outside the decision making process, then present your solution ('create discontent and solve it' is the basis of all marketing).

Note any and all power imbalances among cliques. Your entry into a certain clique may tip the scales enough for hostilities to be considered worthwhile, and you can also enrage individual members of larger cliques to the point where they call on backup and create inter-clique conflict. Naturally, if you are the catalyst in the former example, you should confer with other trolls to make each side evenly matched, before systematically routing all of them.

Be aware of and exploit the Pygmalion Effect. Briefly stated, the Pygmalion Effect is that people tend to behave as you expect they will. If you expect a person to take responsibility, they probably will. If you expect them to not even try, they probably won't. Also known sometimes as a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Further reading.

This is far from everything I could add, though it is exhaustive enough to be recognizable in many different trolling campaigns. Being rationally aware of these strategies will give you greater flexibility both when planning and in the field, allowing for better general trolling, also.

However, as a “homework” exercise, I suggest the HIMEOBS member wanting to shine should read anything by Plato, to see the Socratic Method in action, read up on rhetoric and sophistry, and finally read The Art of Eristic Debate, which will be included with this download. All of these will add a verbal/debating edge which will improve your skills no end.

Make your own browser bomb: a technical guide by 000

Step 1 - acquiring the necessary resources

a) *The code to a browser bomb*

One has been provided with this guide for your use

b) *Some random USA contact information*

For this we can use a google query like this:
http://www.google.com/search?q=contact-us+zip+address&start=666

c) *A throwaway email account*

I usually use operamail.com, it's reliable, quick and easy signup procedure, and no frills. This is a quick link to the first step of the signup procedure: (which is already past the "I agree/TOS" screen)
http://www.operamail.com/templates/common/us/username.htm

Think of some username, then proceed to the next screen where you fill in the random contact info from step (b). Simply make up any missing info. That's it. I find it's helpful to have a small list of about 5 terribly-easy to remember passwords to simply pick from, as a rule for emails (this is a good idea for accounts, too - Cain).

d) A free webspace provider

First you need to find one. Of course there's no such thing as free lunch, so all of these providers will try to screw you in one way or another. the trick is to find one that screws you *just* the right way. I suggest to use some google-fu or to browse the large web-directories (which are much less spammed than regular search engines for these kinds of queries):

- http://www.google.com/Top/Computers/Internet/Web_Design_and_Development/Hosting/Free/
- http://dir.yahoo.com/Business_and_Economy/Business_to_Business/Communications_and_Networking/Internet_and_World_Wide_Web/Network_Service_Providers/Hosting/Web_Site_Hosting/Free_Hosting/

Pick one. I picked http://www.fateback.com/ , use the same fake contact info to fill in whatever details they want to know.

Now, check your email, click the activation link, etc.

Step 2 - uploading the code

a) unpack the code

Unzip the code to a local directory on your hard disk. This particular zip-file will unpack to three files in a subdirectory called "ding"

b) upload the files

Actually this is kind of hard to explain, because it varies a lot depending on the type of free webhoster you got. First, try to find out if the webhoster supports FTP uploads. If this is the case, you must find out these things:
- the FTP-server hostname. this is often something like *ftp.username.webhosterdomain.com*.
- the FTP-server username. often this is equal to your username, hostname or username.hostname or ftp.username.hostname whatever.
- the FTP-server password. usually equal to the password you checked, sometimes it's generated automatically and emailed to you.

Then you need an FTP-client. if you're using Windows, i highly recommend FileZilla. If you're using Linux you have a wide range of options, but you should know what to do already.

Now connect to the FTP server with your FTP-client application, and simply drag-n-drop the files you unzipped in the previous step to the FTP-server, and that should be it.

If the webhost does not support FTP-uploads, it probably has some browser-based file manager. These things are often buggy as fuck, slow and cumbersome to use, but not really hard to figure out. In this case you will end up on a screen where you can simply Choose and Upload the files, but you have to do it one by one.

Step 3 - test to see if it works

You just made a website! Now you need to figure out at what URL you can find it. Usually the email you got from them tells you this information, otherwise you can guess. it's usually something like:
http://www.freewebhoster.com/username
http://www.freewebhoster.com/~username
http://username.freewebhoster.com/

Sometimes they even let you pick your own subdomain, so you can get something like http://whateveryoupick.somefreedomainname.tld

This was the case with fateback.com so they let me register yollyollyoll.yoll.net (srsly)

If you visit http://yollyollyoll.yoll.net/ you will find the contents of the file index.html (this is the default). If you see some inane story about dysliectic unicorns, you will have succeeded. The index file does not crash your browser.

The browsercrashing page is http://yollyollyoll.yoll.net/page2.html (will crash your browser)

Suggested reading list (uploaded on request)

The Mystery Method – A handbook to the Venusian Arts

Typically seen as a Speed Seduction book, this actually takes apart social interactions in quite a coherent and deep way, explaining the rational behind certain behaviour producing set results. Useful if you wish to ingratiate yourself with certain communities, or indeed any long-term honey trap troll. DHV's on the internet, when approaching the social hook point, are likely to be coherency and general good humour/disposition, I should point out.

Cicero – Selected Works and Speeches

Found freely online, you too can read the caustic and brilliant flaming which Cicero subjected his enemies to, before he was executed for making Mark Antony cry, anyway. Best reads are his recollections of the legal trials he took part in and his speeches to the Senate against Mark Antony.

Leil Lowdnes – How to Talk to Anyone

Basically, a book focused on improving communication skills. Ignore the inanity and take from it what you can. Even if only to give you ideas for fluff talk while infiltrating a site.

The CIA – Kurbark Manual

The original torture manual, goes into depth into how a person's sense of self can be broken down. Might be a couple of ego-crushing tactics within that are worth your time, just waiting to be field tested.

The Intelligence Science Board – Educing Information

An excellent guide to the art of deception and methods of uncovering it. Valuable beyond words for its psychological insights.

The 36 Strategies by T'ai Kung

Learn how to think really outside of the box with this. An invaluable guide to skullduggery, trickery and deceit.

Polti – the 36 Dramatic Situations

Add a touch of class, refinement and theatre to your troll. Add that epic element without which the internet could not live!

Myspace for Dummies

Well, one day, this COULD prove useful. But probably not. Regardless, it is there for the taking.

Max Stirner – The Ego and his own

Just to get you in that “everyone is an asshole” frame of mind (Ann Coulter also available for similar uses).